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EDITORIAL.

THERE has been a noticeably increasing tendency in recent months for the editorial commentators of literary journals to deal with matters of a political and general nature. In some cases their articles have been undistinguishable from those in the daily Press. In such times as the present the temptation for an editor to make use of space at his disposal for the airing of his views on subjects of so urgent an import to us all may be perhaps excused. Far from being of the opinion that literature should dwell apart from the world in its own ivory and cloud-capped tower we intend, however, to continue our policy of making good writing the only rule for appearance in our pages. We have always sought to fight against that silly watertight division of literary cliques into left and right winged groups which has done more to ruin poetry and vilify its very name in the past twenty years than anything else. The war, it is our profound hope, may serve us, by our isolation from Europe, from the isms and movements, both political and literary, that were steadily poisoning the English mind and pen. A consequence already to be discerned and, for our part, heartily welcomed is a closer contact and unity between the English speaking peoples all over the world, and more particularly the

continent of America. What better could the writer of English desire than a public of so many millions which shares his ideals and modes of thought, avid of experiment but tolerant of tradition and the English heritage, a public that is not disdainful and apathetic of the poetry being written to-day in spite of every conceivable difficulty—and buys it ?

With this Winter number "Poetry Quarterly" concludes its second volume and the first year under its present Editor. It has been a year of testing hardship in the publishing world. Many subscribers are too busy or otherwise unable to continue to help us with their support. Our faithful friends—those for whom poetry is not just a pleasant spare time hobby to be dropped when other matters press but a serious aspect of their spiritual make-up—have not fallen away. Their loyalty expressed in many letters to "Poetry Quarterly" has been of much comfort and a source of satisfaction in this time of trial.

COMPETITIONS.

Owing to the difficulty and length of time occasioned by communication with the United States, it is still a matter of some uncertainty whether the Twenty Dollar Award for the best poem in the four issues which have appeared during 1940 under the present Editor, will reach this country. In order, however, not to disappoint readers, The Grey Walls Press will be pleased to offer a Prize of One Guinea, a second Prize of a year's subscription to "Poetry Quarterly," as well as a third award of book prizes for the best poems which have appeared during the year 1940. Mr. S. J. Looker, whose Selected Poems the Grey Walls Press have just published and who is well known for his critical and editorial work, has consented to adjudicate. The result will be announced in the Spring 1941 "Poetry Quarterly."

Conversation on a Winter's Afternoon.

I SAT at my office desk looking out through the window down the High Street of the old Essex village where the Grey Walls Press has its home. The cold, pale sunlight of the winter afternoon showed up the hidden dusty corners of the room and appealed to me to leave it and be out in the bright and glittering air outside. But on my table was a mass of correspondence to be dealt with, odds and ends of work, descriptive matter concerning the Press to be sent out to all those who, in a mad world, still find sanity and peace of mind in poetry. As I sat thinking whether to be carefree with a ray of sunshine out of doors is not better than this wearisome and difficult battle of intellectual values and the things of the mind in a stuffy room, my good friend and fellow crusader, Mr. Samuel Looker's face appeared like a satyr grinning through the window. He was gloating, not over some nymph or dryad in distress, but over the neat appearance of the first two books issued by the Grey Walls Press which were in the window on the street. In another moment he was inside, and the following conversation took place:

Looker: "You say the Grey Walls Press stands for modern ideals and the modern spirit, and yet I find you surrounded by a collection of old books and pictures. Why is this?"

Wrey Gardiner: "Well, my dear Looker, if you read our leaflet, you will see that Poetry is one of England's greatest heritages, which means a tradition that we have to carry on. I can read Milton and Shakespeare and Chaucer, but I can't use the language current in their time, which would be as ridiculous as going out in the street in Elizabethan dress."

Looker: "It all sounds very wise, but why do I find Shelley on your shelves and not Keats? Surely Keats is among the greatest of all English Poets, and

you, with your catholic tastes, should be the first to recognize this. Surely he was the greatest poetic spirit England has ever possessed, not excepting Shakespeare."

Wrey Gardiner: "I am afraid that like many of my generation I find it very hard to read Keats at all. I seem to be always running up against antique bookish images of the Wardour Street variety—palfreys, maidens in distress and 'kisses four' to help out the rhyme. Too much ore in the rifts and realms of gold hung with tinsel."

Looker: "I appreciate that you cannot read Keats. It is quite clear from the context of your remarks that you have never done so. As for your generation, so much the worse for it. Now I begin to understand for the first time why they write such abominable verses. If they had read Keats and had a hundredth part of his poetic imagination or craftsmanship, they might prove themselves poets instead of bores. One other word. I defy you to find more than one or two palfreys in the whole of Keats and, like most of your generation, you are continually falling over non-existent obstacles in your attempts to achieve critical originality."

Wrey Gardiner: "Palfreys or pacing steeds, they are all one. Actually I have read Keats' whole works, but it was many years ago when I was travelling in Italy, living among aspidistras in Victorian hotels, and when his cloying and artificial imagery among those ruins and baroque monuments where he died did not strike me as out of place. Since then, however, a great deal has happened. A new poetry has come into being which, however disagreeable it may sound to our ears, cannot be ignored. It is a poetry born not of pale young men pouring over Chapman's Homer but written by a tougher fibred generation who, many of them, have died in the fighting in Spain and are now called on to take up the challenge again for their own country for an ideal which has to be defended with bullets instead of words."

Looker: "I agree most heartily with your conclusion but only wish it followed from your premises. What on earth has fighting in Spain to do with Keats? Certainly the modern poetry I abominate was written before

the war in Spain or the present conflict, and I can only conclude that your eloquent defence is an afterthought. At any rate you show how little you know of the essential Keats, who was one of the most robust spirits in our literature. You go on to say that his imagery is artificial. Not at all. To take only one example from the 'Eve of St. Agnes,' 'The hare limped trembling through the frozen grass,' which is not half so artificial as most of the costive tropes wrenched from their setting by your contemporaries. The images of Keats have both truth and beauty while the melody of his measures, as in the wonderful line, 'Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways,' as well as the splendour and the felicity of his epithets—all these things proclaim him the greatest of poets."

Wrey Gardiner: "Of course, it is easy to demonstrate in this way by removing, like a surgeon, lines from whole poems. But I maintain that the main body of the work is one of a young man who has not yet found his true utterance. That is one of the reasons why I prefer Shelley. The extra few years that Shelley lived, and the whole story of his life, seems to me to prove his general excellence, and it is precisely this quality which is the true criterion of criticism. Shelley's life and work form a whole which balances. He lived his poetry and that is as it should be."

Looker: "I know of no poet with less I should desire away than Keats; on the other hand, two-thirds of Shelley is completely unreadable. What a cunning fellow you are. You speak of general excellence as the criterion of true criticism. I say this is sheer nonsense, for in the end it all amounts to a question of personal preference. You class the authors you wish to praise under the heading of general excellence which, being translated, means 'I like them,' and the success or otherwise with which you defend your preferences in literature or, as you prefer to call them, 'general excellence,' depends, as the eighteenth century would say, upon the quickness of your parts and the brightness of your intellect. Stripped of your rhetoric, what you really wish to do is to take away the 'Ode to a Nightingale' and

'Ode to a Grecian Urn, and give me instead 'The Waste Land' or 'Cat Lapping Milk,' by Harold Munro, or 'Lady Stitching' by Bowes-Lyon and 'Jane, Jane' by Edith Sitwell. I should consider myself infinitely the poorer by the exchange even if in your frantic attempt to keep abreast of the times you threw in as make-weight half a dozen of the very latest poetic chicklets."

Wrey Gardiner: "My dear Looker, I can't let you get away with that. The whole trouble with both sides in this argument, which has caused so much ink to be spilt in the last twenty years, is that neither of them will take the trouble to read the other with any care or understanding. Instead, they choose the most obviously bad poems as examples to deplore, such as Keats' 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci.' They don't know anything of Eliot's except 'The Waste Land,' have never heard of Roy Campbell and Laurence Whistler, Christopher Hassell and Ruth Pitter, to name only a few of the modern poets who write with one eye on our great heritage of English tradition which is being thrown to the dogs because people nowadays are too superficial to read anything they don't 'like,' too lazy to wade through the duller parts of Milton and the others for the sake of the wonderful things that, with patience, one finds. As for your jibe at chicklets, if there were none there would be no full-grown birds, and I find among them a definite sign of the revival of a new poetry full of the pain and suffering of our times but full of sincerity, clarity of meaning and not insensitive to that beauty at which the generation entre deux guerres sneered so disgustedly."

Our readers and contributors are warned that if a periodical to which they intend to contribute requires any payment for such contributions they should communicate with the Society of Authors as to its standing.

A special word of thanks is due to our printers, who have carried on with this issue of POETRY QUARTERLY in circumstances of very great difficulty.

SONNET

(For Priscilla).

Walking alone in the familiar places,
The places where we used to go some evenings,
Seeing things in the dark, hearing the horses
Move in the field under the Tree of Heaven,

The places where we never wished to be,
Except we liked the moon and wanted peace:
I remember the wonder of your face,
And, though you are not here, wish you to be.

O, I wish under the stars near the Tree of Heaven,
On this perfect night when the black bombers may come.
The horses only have their field for home,
But I, too, wishing, may be forgiven,

Wishing to see your face, and in your eyes
The look of love that still keeps me in peace.

NICHOLAS MOORE.

HARLEQUINADE.

A craven in the gallery of time . . . .
Sixpence a mock virility affords,
Who watches from the dusk the pantomime
And dare not take his place upon the boards;
But sits there bowed in impotent distress,
Guilty with thrill of second-hand delight,
Crushed with the burden of his righteousness,
Aesthete, idealist and anchorite.
Beauty is shamed in Columbine pursued;
Grotesqueness, pitiful in Pantaloon;
And in the Clown's mute crassitude
Himself he sees, an obsolete buffoon.
Oh! for an hour of courage that could sin,
And leap, and strike, and kiss like Harlequin.

L. COLE.

JUST TO———

I leave some floating flowers,
Just to remind you of me.
Think of me sometimes in woods,
Where waterfalls fall to the sea.

Do not trouble your head that I passed,
Immersed mid green earth, to be chaste.
When the goodness of life was gone:
I alone beneath the Moon.

They held me back in hot haste;
Begged me to be a solid thing, to taste
All flesh's fine, entrancing niceties.
But I half heard the swan's serene sublimities.

There was nothing there at all worth while.
It was better to walk away a further mile
From men, and all their tumbling, talking habitations;
To grow in the soul—pine woods—sorrow's still plantations.

Silence, I could taste. He alone was true.
The rest passed, as the World passed, on with rue.
I followed them afar off with eyes of sober relief.
They, at last, had left me alone to the wine of grief.

When the snows were on the summit, I would walk the woods.
The pines would pass out to me their winding shadows,
And I would become a dove of peace in the wilderness.
All that I wanted was here hidden with the snowdrop.

A tear could ne'er have fallen to the frozen silence,
Which stills all grief, and makes all the same;
A clear scented dirge, pale chastity's refrain:
"Earth is all lust. Man must to gain."

E. R. VERE-HODGE.

LOVE.

Will you throw me the moon tonight ?
The separate glitter of each virgin star
Mocks the sensuous sea as it yearns moonwards.

White arms and dazzle of limbs
The thin music of the gramophone
Wine splashing from the overturned glass.

Weeds whisper in the river murmurs
Entwining deeply in the cool gleam
Will you throw me the moon tonight ?

MARY CARTER.

Now having put an end to hope,
An end to self-glorification,
To all the little plans and ambitions
With which we amuse ourselves,
Now having put an end to this and that
Joyfully, oh most joyfully, do I commit myself
To the deep air, to the sun, to the winds,
To grow with the blades of grass,
To unfold in the petals of daisies,
To beat with the spray upon the rocks,
Caressing the sea-weed as the tide ebbs and flows.

And, as the wind passes over the uplands,
I rejoice, being free to surrender myself up
To the unknown.

PATRICIA LEDWARD.

PHILISTINE ROAD.

Philistine Road is filled with spires.
And the people look out from small suspicious eyes,
hostile to anything beyond their ken;
ignorant of beauty, unable to comprehend
anything but money and flesh and greed.
And they walk up and down Philistine Road,
eyes closed, hearts closed,
with an emptiness in their souls.
And the spires that they have raised are meaningless,
except in terms of money, bazaars and church attendances:
and the beauty that they have made, unwittingly,
is passed by them unseen, uncomprehended.
For the people in Philistine Road have narrow eyes,
and narrow hearts and narrower souls.

And yet, and yet—
there is a twisted sort of beauty in it, too:
A ghost of what might have been,
weeping in the dark
for light and hope, a distant dim nobility,
and a better world.

ROY McFADDEN.

LISTENING TO DISTANT GUNS.

The roses tremble; oh, the sunflower's eye
Is opened wide in sad expectancy.
Westward and back the circling swallows fly,
The rooks' battalions dwindle near the hill.

That low pulsation in the east is war:
No bell now breaks the evening's silent dream.
The bloodless clarity of evening's sky
Betrays no whisper of the battle-scream.

DENISE LEVERTOFF.

POETRY.

Admit that fish are poetry!
I know you feel that colour
That red and peacock blue
Black lines and faint gold are poetry.
If you feel that: then fish
Are grimmer poetry than you wish.

I know you felt as soon as
You heard the word of rhythm:
It gave, like water, deep
And wavering poetry. Fish swim
Like pliant swords and bent
Back daggers: poetry there is spent!

CATHERINE B. TOOSEY.

ON LISTENING TO MUSIC BY DELIUS.

Fancy heard an echo through her halls—
as waving leaves, a sad noise
moving of springtime when the heart least pities sorrow.
O limber music, when she falls
in such a far sweet mood
she washes and destroys
all wounds of fickle things upon the soul;
and O, her breath doth tremble
with a gauzy whispering,
an echo of an echo,
dimly heard, and lit before the mind of vision.

J. D. BRITTON.

We saw September coming, distant;
Smudging the clear blue with ragged gold.
And it was Time, shadows falling on the shimmering whiteness
His stretched fingers pointing, black and cold.

Then we knew the spiky dried up year
In cracked whispers grating on our ear
Told us with twisted breaking leer
Told us, though we had no wish to hear.

The damp cool air breaking like the sea
Over our feet, as we walked through evening fields,
Collects, weaving, sinister and thin, mesmerically shaping
Before our eyes, the shadowy hand fate deals.

The Puckish glee of those who turn
And watch us, pressing with our heads against the sticky night.
They scramble lightly round the earth
Not knowing past from future, wrong from right.

Their hair is wispy, their laugh cracks,
The empty air gives no echo back,
Their footfalls make no sound, they walk, but leave no track,
Their eyes no light refracts.

We poor fools go on,
Hoping to leave our mark upon a world that does not care;
Knows not this month, it never will;
September leans and topples, her shallow roots laid bare.

MARY EMMETT.

ON SAINT DAVID'S HEAD.

Grey-granite-fretted edge
Of this green ledge,
Whereunder muted thunder
Of the sea's soliloquy
Dies ceaselessly in space,
Here, over wild tide-race,
The face of pain,
Coeval with vast time,
Fronts mine again.
Amid these primal strengths,
Yet more sublime;
Like these, upthrust
From raging inmost fire,
Through earth's old breast,
Unsevered from desire,
Grief, from the spirit's womb,
In fresh rebirth,
Knowing no lasting rest,
O'ershadows mortal mirth
From God's antiquity.
E'en now, in this lone place,
Though heather-bells ring out
Their purple song
With emerald sweet alloy,
The dire, dark throat of war,
With brazen shout,
Blazons its hideous wrong
In utterance more strong
Than all our joy.

The gull's snow-wing swing-sweep
Of rhythmed flight,
Lighting still fathoms deep
Of stepless air,
Shall cosmic music keep
And its delight,
That suffers not despair.

DAVID FRIDLANDER.

W. B. YEATS.

Eire has mourned for many sons before;
on war-fed fields they lie in restless sleep.
But, oblivious of the fateful feats of war,
her greatest flower, unwithered, slumbers deep.
Passed by the torches of the years,
lighting the drearest depths of doom,
his flame puts glister to our tears,
and sets afire that sodden faggot, gloom.
And, through the mists of Innisfree
in undiluted glory—See!
The feckless faeries of the isles are dancing round his tomb.

PETER BAKER.

ANN.

Before Ann slept in the noontide heat
The flowers and the grass and the great green trees
Were all of them shaken this way and that
By garrulous gusts of a playful breeze.

She watched them, the oak and sycamore,
The chestnut, the poplar and spreading plane,
Bending their branches, like curtseying girls,
To the thin, sweet tune of far-off rain.

Even the flowers in the speckled shade
That spread round her feet like a thrush's breast,
Deliciously trembled, like maids in love,
Whenever the wanton wind caressed.

Drowsily Ann, through her half-shut eyes,
Saw scudding white clouds in the stormy sky,
Like small fishing ships on a choppy sea
Dipping and tossing and sailing by.

Slowly the wind, as the sun sank low,
Stole back to the tryst that the great winds keep;
The flowers and the grass and the great green trees,
Even as Ann, were rocked to sleep.

She woke when the stars' unblinking light
Pierced through her eyes and her face and her hair,
In the black, bright sky the pitiless moon
Froze her young heart with an ice-cold glare.

No sound stirred high in the great green trees,
Nor pasture, nor valley, nor distant hill,
And it seemed to Ann, in her half-waked soul,
That all of the world was deathly still.

Out from the pulseless and frozen wood,
And over the silver-washed fields she sped,
Through ebon hedges so lifeless and stiff,
A world that was surely asleep or dead.

Towards the place where a stream should spring
She ran like a ghost past the brown beehive,
Her long hair flying and the moon in her eyes,
To see if the world were still alive.

The small stream sang like a joyous bird,
Its quenchless chirrup rose sweet and clear,
And Ann, with a prayer in her thudding heart,
Knew there was nothing at all to fear.

ELIZABETH TEMPLE WELLS.

ON THE ESTIMATION OF BEAUTY.

If we despise humanity but reverence art,
Are we consistent in our estimation ?
Life is Creation's art, art life's creation,
And at its noblest, mere imitation.
Thus, though men's minds find fields however fair,
Fields must be fed, if fruit would flourish there.

RICHARD E. WALKER.

AUTUMN WOODS.

Now days are hushed and still, and golden hours
Drift past like echoed music of a song,
Whose melody comes back from summer's heart,
To pulse and throb awhile, both sweet and strong.
And woods are held in silence by a spell
Of gold enchantment where the listening trees
Stand round as if they waited for a step
That comes not, yet is whispered on the breeze . . .
And when the sun draws near to setting time,
It pours its radiance down the amber glades,
While later, mists of evening cool its light,
And like a candle snuffed—the glory fades.

EDITH A. VASSIE.

WATER SCENE.

"LOCH ALVIE."

So still the waters lay
The frozen loch did stay
Breathless in every hue
The opal ever knew.
Around in silence stood
The hills in pensive mood
All white the glistening fields
No bird its music yields.
All nature in a trance
Lay spell-bound at a glance.

PEARL MORE SMIETON.

"RES EX EDACE RERUM."

As one that takes for world a little room;
That sets his candle for the common light,
And toward each about him comes to assume
Spatial relation fixt and definite;
That feels—all signs of alien life outwaking—
Heart-silence with heart-solitude conjoint
Frame him a world of fresh dimensions, making
Time, time and space, cohere into a point;
As such a one then a friend or verse remembers,
Nor strays beyond himself until, thought-rife,
He leaves his musing by the faded embers,
And, little loth, lays by his waking life:
So it were good thus, in a thought sublime
Summing Time's count, to bid good-bye to Time.

H. B. JENNINGS.

THE INNER STREAM.

The surface of the river whelms with rage,
Crashing upon the rocks with clarion cry,
Each vortex is eddying mountains high
With boiling pools that form a frightening cage
For denizens of this tumultuous stream.
But while the rapids pirouette and whirl,
A current lies beneath with gentle purl,
Which bears a mystic measure in its dream.
Its frailness has a music of its own.
It conquers all the stormy upper part.
The rippling murmur is my mournful heart
That inner stream flows on for me alone.

DOROTHY FAY.

DARK ANGELS.

Death all around—
Not quiet, natural death,
Not perfect ending of a simple life,
A passing into Heaven's immensities,
A walking through the dark into the day—
But death sudden !
Death smashing life !
Death taking dignity from man,
Death tearing out the growing soul.

How many thus, stunted by hate and fear,
Wings undeveloped, eyes yet blind and sealed,
Must stumble about in pitchy dark and cold,
Earth ever lost, their blind eyes seeking Heaven's gates
in vain ?
Where is the love will find them, lead them home?
Where is the love will dare the outer darkness,
Sink in the dread abysm, feel the icy cold,
The bitter chill of hopelessness and hate,
The crooked fingers clutching as it passes?
Oh! love itself could lose the way to Heaven,
Bound by its very pity for those lost souls,
The unseeing eyes, the weight of groping hands.
Will even love dare to forget its home?
Dare to see only myriad pale faces
Crowding those bleak and frozen courts of Hell?
What wanton waste of lovely life was theirs,
What opportunity on earth passed by
To look at beauty with fair-seeing eyes.
Clouds that made Alps in summer skies
Meant only storm of rain to them—
Bright autumn berries, food for birds,
Meant only winter, drawing on apace.
Neither the green sap in the wakening tree,
Nor the strong life within the opening flower,
Nor mystery in the throat of singing bird,
Could bring a quick response from their dull eyes.
How then can they, from shattered body spurned,
Walk in the cool sweet paths of wide-spread Heaven
And see tall lilies moving in the wind?

Beauty beyond their understanding will be there,
But eyes unused see men as trees that walk,
Distorted, strange, incomprehensible,
They will not clearly see Heaven's citizens
Gracious and tall, grave-eyed, with flaming hair
And joyful mien.
Death will seem dark and cold, with crowding ghosts
Beating upon them, wails and lamentations in their ears.

Yet Heaven will still be there, its glory blinding
To eyes long atrophied by lack of use,
And love will guard them though their frozen hearts
Will feel Him not, Who yet knows all Hell's tortures,—
Then in the shadowy darkness of despair
Fear will lay whips upon their naked backs,
Shame will draw tears to wash their sealed eyes,
Bitter Defeat drag last of self away,
And these dark angels bring them home to God.

I. M. RENDELL.

INSTEAD.

Who slays the beast in man
Has found himself again.
Who drops a sheep from claws
Before he beaks the brain
Can spread his wing's disdain
Above all crunching jaws.
Who sickles stemmy briars down
May weave an olive crown.
Who draws his sword to tip
A plough may let his team
Tug lightly at its beam,
For gardens hem the rip.
Who dares to share his bread
With man, returns instead.

Who gives a lighted match
To cast his shadow wide
Has raised a cottage latch
Where mankind can abide.

CHESTER ANDERS FEE.

THE VILLAGES OF DEVON.

The villages of Devon, O they have names that sing!
There's Teignton of the Bishop and Teignton of the king;
From combe and cove they named them, from river, rock and tor,
From clerk and hardy seamen and armèd knight of yore;
Tavy and Yealm and Tamar, Otter and Erme and Plym,
Have christened sovereign Devon out of the ages dim:
Tavy Cleave and Petertavy, Yealmton and Ermington,
Stoke Fleming, Bratton Fleming, and Stow of Mary's Son,
Bridestow, Churchstow, Stoke Gabriel, Combe Martin, Frithelstock,
Combe Raleigh, Sampford Courtenay, and Croyd and Spinster's Rock,
Teigngrace and Stoke-in-Teignhead, Abbot's- and Kingskerswell,
And Tamerton of Foliot and Sampford Peverell,
Shaugh Prior and Dean Prior, Lew Trenchard, Appledore,
And Buckland Monachorum and Buckland-in-the-Moor,
Beer Alston and Beer Ferrers, Beesands and Dunchideock,
Weare-Giffard, Aveton-Giffard, Torbryan and Tawstock,
High Willhays, Holcombe Rogus, Cruwys Morchard, and Loxbeare,
Alverdiscot and Uplyme, Bellever, Countess Weir:
The villages of Devon, O they have names that sing,
But loveliest from Mary and best from Christ the King!

E. B. W. CHAPPELOW.

THE MOTHER.

(H.M.S. "Glorious." June, 1940.)

TO E.S.

If Joy with tender laughing hold her hand
Outstretched, to take my own in genial clasp,
O Friend, come thou and join the cheerful band,
And share the pleasured hours within its grasp.

But when the gloomy tyranny of Grief
Has buried Hope awhile, rolled up the stone,
Then come not, friends—myself shall find Belief
To bear the burdened sepulture alone.

* * * *

Yet not alone, for love-companioned thought
In sacrament as dedicate as mine,
When mine seemed drowned in solitude, had wrought:
"The heart of all the world in grief, is thine."

RUDOLPH BURNEY.

GOD WILL BRING PEACE AGAIN . . . .

God will bring peace again
To an England, on whose head
No conqueror's heel shall tread.

God will bring peace again
To the quiet countryside
And the proud hills, far and wide.

God will bring peace again
To the sea, wherein the deep,
Men of all nations sleep.

God will bring peace again
To the air and sky above,
In his everlasting love
God will bring peace again.

DOREEN C. WATTS.

TO ONE I LOVE.

Not gifts,
Not wealth, nor fame, nor praise,
Not things of price,
Not length of days,
I send you, for they are not mine.
One thing alone's my own:
I send you love—
That holds them all.

CAROLINE MAXWELL LEE.

REVIEWS.

By WREY GARDINER.

Poems. By Leonard Clark. The Fortune Press. 4/6.

Leonard Clark is known to readers of "Poetry Quarterly" by several notable contributions in recent numbers. "Poems" will increase his reputation as a poet. "October" is a beautiful little poem. Although to print the last seven words as four lines may give it a more modern appearance it does not add to its depth and gravity. The author is very fond of this somewhat dangerous trick of the free verse writer of stretching out a poem by using one or two words as a single line, presumably to mark a pause in the reading. Sometimes successful, it is often tiresome, especially in unrhymed verse. Where rhyme is used, as in "The Cottage":

> Older than dreams
> Older than the dead scents of flowers,
> these walls, these beams
> stand content as the hours
> drip into time,

the shortness of the lines produces a music which hypnotises the reader immediately into the mood of the poet. "Dirge" is equally successful for the same reason. In "Incalculable" the well sustained emotion is sufficient to infuse the poem with a drum-beat of power, and in

"Love Poem" the last two lines,

I plumb the deepest well
I clutch the highest star,

bring by this final clinch a rather dull poem to life.

Mr. Clark can write a memorable line, as

spattering the hours with little waterfalls of words . . .

or

in the long canyon of eternity,

which rings hollowly with its "n" sounds like an echo among rocks. "The Prisoner" is an example of his favourite technique which happens to fit precisely and with great effect the sentiment of the poem. But he is not always successful. "Flower Lovers" is an amusing and witty criticism on horticulturists who think of beauty only in terms of enormous blooms and forget the loveliness of small wild flowers, even weeds growing in a wilderness. The volume closes with a long poem called "Refuge," introduced by a prose argument which seems a somewhat trite and unnecessary prefatory overtone. It is true, as he remarks in the body of the poem,

Not all
Can hear the overtones of perfect love,

and to write of it so that the reader is caught and held by the ecstatic fire of experience is one of the most difficult tasks any poet can set himself. That Leonard Clark has so often succeeded in doing this is the greatest measure of praise it is possible to give him. When he has attained the serenity of mind of which he writes,

Serenity is attitude of mind
Accomplished after tempest hammered years;
The ugly rock yields precious silver ore,

it may be predicted that he will give us something really great.

Over The Edge. By Patricia Ledward. 1/-. Resurgam Younger Poets.

This interesting series of broadsheets by younger poets is introduced by a foreword, short and to the point, which is always worth reading. Mr. Eric Chetwynd calls his essay "The Substance of Poetry." He is worth quoting: "Poetry is life. All men are poets, some un-

consciously, some consciously, but all are poets, are artists. All feel at some time the agony and joy, the beauty and tragedy that is life; all must give expression to their emotions at least once in their life, in words that are deep-felt, beautiful and true. Poetry is the essence of life." This is well put. Although Miss Ledward's desire for sincerity and simplicity sometimes leads her into the doldrums of banality, she can achieve a Chinese artistry in poems like "Another Night." She would do well to be careful with adjectives. Stars have been perhaps too many times described by poets, but to call them "multiflickered" or "huge" does not add to our appreciation of them. In the last two poems, "Plea for Escape" and "The Stronghearted," Miss Ledward rises to greater heights, and the horror and pain which is always just round the corner for this generation breaks through with no uncertain tone and moves us. When she has learnt to chasten her language with a greater self-criticism she will give us a really great collection of poems, for she often achieves the subtle perfection of true poetry, as

> In that deserted garden where the grass
> Grows long and wild, roses and nettles dusty thick,
> and lime leaves falling to the ground like moths,
> does the stone figure ever bend its head and weep?

In the Autumn "Kingdom Come," the Magazine of War-time Oxford, there are some good things, notably an excellent article by Laurence Whistler deploring the complete ignorance and indifference of the public about poetry for the last twenty years. He remarks on the total collapse of every critical standard. This article alone is worth the shilling the magazine costs. There is a long poem by Herbert Read which, with those of Nicholas Moore and V. de S. Pinto, are the best in this issue. "Kingdom Come" also prints quite a number of short stories, most of them dull and rather too self-consciously proletarian, the best of them perhaps, "Almost A Love Story," by Woodrow Wyatt. One would wish for more book reviews in a periodical of this standing. It is tastefully produced and has all our good wishes in these hard times.

SHORTER NOTICES.

Sharp Scorpions. Wrey Gardiner. Grey Walls Press. 3/6.

Mr. Gardiner's work needs no introduction to readers of "Poetry Quarterly," and this new collection, born in the midst of this world-wide struggle between the highest and lowest use man can make of the gift of Life, gleams like a lamp in the dark tunnel of war. The small wonderings of a mind as it stands alone, the significant sigh of a leaf as it falls, the "soundless song" of the Moon—these, with wild winds, grey seas and the awful strength of human passions, are the straws which go to make a selection of poems whose forceful interpretations will never fail the reader's mood.

Green Branches. Selected Poems by Samuel J. Looker. Grey Walls Press. 2/6.

Too many, as they travel along the road of life, forget "the joy of innocency"—perhaps through familiarity, more often through an overcrowding of sour sophistication born of too much busyness. The "gift of wonder and the joy of discovery" are lost amid the cares and troubles of daily life. The lives and works of Wordsworth and Richard Jefferies provide notable examples of the preservation of the pure outlook that is the hall-mark of childhood, and Mr. Looker, an ardent disciple, trims the lamp. With all their welcome simplicity there is, however, no "escapism" in these verses, but rather a mellow selectivity of what is and always will be worth while in life, despite the turmoils of hatred and war, pain and poverty. I recommend "Green Branches" with words from the author's introductory essay: "It is the secret hidden life that counts, not the outward semblance of sensation and event."

Tiring of Tongues and Other Poems. J. R. Constance. Keyswift, Ltd., Edgware. 3/3 post free.

A book of solid tempered verse full of lessons of tolerance, sympathy and faith, this well-filled volume acts like a set of scales in the grocer's shop of the

wondering and wandering mind, bringing a measured sanity to the weighing of virtues, thoughts and things. Cabbages and sparrows mix in democratic friendliness with Light, Loneliness and the spell of old books. The author, in his Foreword, compares "this new-born book" with "a bundle of waste-paper or a bundle of humanity." The publication of this collection in 1940 proves that no war-time measures will succeed in quenching true Poetry—"this strange fire in the souls of men."

N. de C. BEATTY.

Black Europe. By Wallace B. Nichols. Shakespeare Head Press, Oxford.

Mr. Nichols is known as the author of "The Song of Sharruk" and is an historical novelist of some merit. The Twenty-six Sonnets printed in "Black Europe" will hardly add to his reputation as a poet. He has word fluency and here and there deftly turns a phrase without in any sense making us feel that he has a great deal to say. This is ornate verse in which the reader is not conscious of the modern spirit. Such lines as "the cosmic sanctions are affirmed by these," or "Hark! Through the 'Why' of Man, God's awfuller 'Why?' " give the context a curiously bloodless look. These sonnets on the war remind me of the story told of President Calvin Coolidge, that taciturn man, who after a visit to church was pressed by a friend to reveal the subject of the sermon. A long pause followed the question, and then the President replied: "It was about Sin." "But what view did the preacher take?" pressed the friend. "Well," returned Coolidge, "he was against it." I quote the two final lines of sonnet xix, "The One Perfection,"

> We have gone a-whoring after other gain
> Than beauty. Now Man drowns in the evil flood!

This is eloquent enough, although the last sentence halts on the edge of bathos and does not achieve the enchantment of poetry. All too often in reading books of verse by traditionalists one is conscious of the lack of creative inspiration. "The hungry sheep look up but are not fed."

S.J.L.